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SIPDIS
COMMERCE FOR NOAA - MARGARIDA YUAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: EAIR TSPA SENV JA
SUBJECT: JAPAN: SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL CHANGE OBSERVATION MISSION SATELLITE PROGRAMS

¶1. This is an action request. Embassy Tokyo is requested to meet with senior officials at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to encourage Japan to maintain its current launch schedule for the Global Change Observation Mission satellite program.

¶2. Background: Japan's Strategic Headquarters for Space Policy is asking for public comments by May 18 on the Basic Space Plan which will soon come into effect as national space strategy for Japan. As currently drafted, the plan would delay by one year the launch of GCOM-C1. The cooperation between JAXA and NOAA on the Global Change Observation Mission (GCOM) has enabled ongoing progress towards the launch of the GCOM-W1 and GCOM-C1. The Japanese launch of these monitoring satellites will open up potential areas of mutual benefit including the exchange of data, GCOM date reception support by NOAA, and cooperation in the calibration/validation of data. In addition the U.S. has proposed the installation of a National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) ground station at JAXA's Earth Observation Center, and believes scientific exchange on satellite derived climate trends and the possibility of U.S. developed dual-frequency scatterometers flying aboard the GCOM-W series of satellites will prove beneficial for weather forecasting and warning and climate research.

¶3. Proposed talking points:

Since 2007, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have met regularly to identify areas of potential collaboration between our agencies.

NOAA is very interested in the benefits presented by GCOM-C Second-generation Global Imager (SGLI) data and GCOM-W Advanced Microwave Scanning Radiometer-2 (AMSR-2) data. Complementary and synergistic datasets from GCOM and the U.S. National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) could be produced for global monitoring of oceans, weather, and climate for user worldwide. This date will also greatly benefit operational users involved in weather forecasting, ocean color, and environmental planning.

We understand that the Japanese space program is now being reorganized under the newly enacted Basic Space Law. This is an important development that will elevate space development as part of the national strategies of Japan. We sincerely hope that the new space program will further strengthen JAXA's ongoing international partnerships and promote a comprehensive and efficient global observing satellite network.

The GCOM program offers an opportunity for Japan to augment its contribution to global Earth observations and further enhance its leadership role in the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and the international community as a whole.

We believe the GCOM program will help promote the goals of both Japan's new space program and of MEXT in advancing aerospace and environmental research to benefit the people of Japan and the global community. None of this cooperation could have been possible without the continued leadership and vision of MEXT.

Maintaining the original anticipated launch dates of GCOM-W and GCOM-C would be most welcome.

I hope you will keep me informed about future developments.

¶4. Embassy Tokyo's assistance is appreciated.
CLINTON